

Supplemental Information for the Proposed Rule for the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement

*Region 2 FWP
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The Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement has been in existence since 1976 when landowners along the Blackfoot River entered into an informal agreement with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and other agencies to manage a stretch of the Blackfoot now referred to as the Corridor. Landowners wished to continue their agricultural way of life and maintain the natural state of the river, while still allowing for the tradition of reasonable public use on private land (access). The original agreement created “a public travel zone along the river bank between parking areas where people can walk, fish, picnic, or carry river craft.” This was defined as 50 feet above the ordinary high-water mark. There are three privately owned, public access sites provided by landowners through the Corridor Agreement (see Exhibit A; Clearwater Bridge (6-Stall), Sunset Hill (3-Stall), and Roundup accesses).

A working group consisting of members of the public, landowners, and agency members reviewed the agreement this past fall, to assure that it would best serve the public and landowners in 2015.

The proposed Administrative Rule of Montana (ARM, or rule), out for public comment through May 8th, would formally allow the public to use the land 50-feet above the high-water mark while in the corridor, unless the area is otherwise posted (see Exhibit A for exemptions to the 50-foot travel zone). For the protection of the resources and safety, the rule would require that fires and camping are only allowed in designated campsites and that campsites used in conjunction with floating must be reserved at least 48 hours in advance. FWP has currently designated a total of 5 designated float-in campsites at 3 locations (see Exhibit A). These sites provide appropriately located and maintained float-in-only campsites within the Corridor. These campsites require users to follow strict leave-no-trace practices with fires only allowed in fire pans. The float-in campsite program is expected to expand, with 3-4 new sites currently being researched.

For further information on the corridor or to reserve a float-in campsite, see FWP’s Blackfoot River and Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor webpage:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/activities/boating/blackfoot/default.html>

or call 406-542-5562.